

The Corps' Overall Response

Restoring the Levees

Lessons Learned

The Official U.S. Army Magazine

June 2006
www.army.mil/soldiers

Soldiers

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Army Birthday Poster
PAGE 48



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An Army National Guard air-
crew member looks out on the
flooded streets of New Orleans
on Sept. 4, 2005.

— Photo by PH1
Brien Aho, USN

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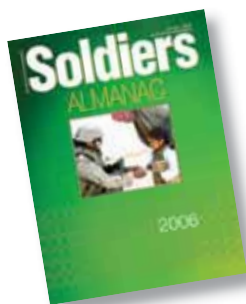
THIS month Soldiers Magazine says farewell to **Helen Hall VanHoose** and **MSG Lisa Gregory** as they retire.

Helen has been the magazine's art director since 1991, advising the editors-in-chief, leading the production team and serving as principal designer. She guided the magazine through several redesigns, including its transition to a full-color publication in 2000, and in the process played an important part in its many awards, including the 2004 Thomas Jefferson Award and National Association of Government Communicators first-place award, the highest honors for Department of Defense and government publications, respectively. From a pure design standpoint, her team also earned the Best in Category award in the 2003 PIAS Graphics Awards competition. For the reader, that meant pages that drew them to the subject and made the content easier to understand — not an easy goal to achieve.

Lisa came to the magazine in 2003 and had an almost immediate impact, recruiting and encouraging writers and photographers to tell the Army story. She played a major role in compiling the annual Soldiers Almanac, authored stories requiring the expertise only a top-level NCO can provide, and managed the magazine's complex budgeting and administrative tasks. But perhaps her most important contribution was when she devised new methods to deliver the magazine to units deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa.

The magazine staff will certainly miss the skills and positive spirit Helen and Lisa brought to each task, and we wish them the best in their future endeavors.

Gil High
Gil High
Editor in Chief



Soldiers magazine is distributed based on unit commanders' requirements. Commanders and publications officers can order Soldiers through the Army Publishing Directorate at <http://docs.usapa.belvoir.army.mil/ordering/store.asp>.

To start or change your unit subscription, enter the **Initial Distribution Number (IDN) 050007**.



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The Official U.S. Army Magazine

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Soldiers (ISSN 0093-8440) is published monthly by the Army Chief of Public Affairs to provide information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of the Army. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

■ Send submissions and correspondence to Editor, **Soldiers**, 9325 Gunston Road, Suite S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581. Phone: DSN 656-4486 or commercial 703-806-4486, or send e-mail to soldiers@belvoir.army.mil.

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■ The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30. Library of Congress call number: U1.A827.

■ Periodicals postage paid at Fort Belvoir, VA, and additional mailing offices.

■ Individual subscriptions: Subscriptions can be purchased through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

■ **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the Fort Belvoir address above.

Soldiers

Recipient of Awards of Magazine Excellence



Thomas Jefferson Awards
Outstanding Flagship
Publication 2004



2003



NAGC Blue Pencil
Competition
2004



Thomas Jefferson Awards
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2006 Army Birthday Message Call to Duty – Boots on the Ground

The United States Army was born out of the desire to defend liberty and proudly celebrates its 231st birthday on 14 June 2006.

Since 1775, millions have worn the uniform and lived the “Warrior Ethos.” Soldiers have always understood that the freedoms our nation guarantees are worth fighting for and America’s decision to put “boots on the ground” illustrates like no other action its continued commitment to these ideals.


Today, America’s Army is engaged in a global war on terrorism and has a presence in 120 countries. Soldiers have long sacrificed their personal comfort and safety to answer a higher calling. Despite hardships and dangers to life and limb, Soldiers have always answered the call — and our nation has long relied on your courage, your sacrifice and your selfless service.


To our Soldiers around the world, our thoughts are with you and your families on this 231st Army Birthday. We are proud to serve with you, as you embody the Warrior Ethos. You have made our Army the most respected institution in the United States and the pre-eminent land power on Earth. We are humbled by your sacrifice and awed by your achievements.

God bless each and every one of you and your families, and God bless America.


Kenneth O. Preston

Sergeant Major of the Army


Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff


Francis J. Harvey
Secretary of the Army





KOREA

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter from Co. B, 2nd Bn., 52nd Avn. Regt., comes in for a landing aboard USS *Blue Ridge* during a joint Army-Navy training evolution.

— Photo by PH1 David J. Hewitt, USN



▲ Korea

Soldiers from the Fort Lewis, Wash.-based 3rd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, file out of an Air Force C-5 Galaxy at Daegu Air Base, Korea, during the buildup of forces for exercise Foal Eagle.

— Photo by SGT Albert Eaddy



▲ Afghanistan

SSG Elena Varela helps an Afghan child lace his new pair of donated shoes during a village medical-outreach visit to Khakeran village in Qalat province.

— Photo by SPC Leslie Angulo



▲ Honduras

CPT Sean Stiltner, a field surgeon from the Ohio Army National Guard, examines a Honduran girl from the village of Aldea Orotinos during the medical readiness training exercise portion of Operation New Horizons.

— Photo by CPL Benjamin Cossell



▲ Afghanistan

SPC Zachary Williams (left) takes the bull by the horns so SGT Jared Cross can give it a dose of deworming medicine during the village medical-outreach visit to Khakeran village.

— Photo by SPC Leslie Angulo



▲ Iraq

Iraqi soldiers conduct a simulated medical evacuation with a flight crew from Company C, 2nd Bn., 4th Aviation Regt., during the convoy lane training at Camp Taji.

— Photo by MAJ David Olson



KATRINA HURRICANE RELIEF

- Soldiers of the 206th Transportation Company turn a pallet of MREs from the USS *Tortuga* before they're loaded by forklift onto a waiting truck for distribution to hurricane relief workers in New Orleans.
- An American flag flies proudly near the destroyed Coast Guard base in Gulfport, Miss.





SFC Gwendolyn Coley

The Corps of Engineer's Overall Response

Story by John Rickey, Chuck Minsker,
Jim Pogue and Susan Jackson

EMPLOYEES of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who are involved in disaster operations have never welcomed the experience of something called the “storm of the century.”

But by the afternoon of Saturday, Aug. 27, it was clear that most members of the Mississippi Valley Division crisis-response teams would be experiencing just such an event.

At the time of writing, John Rickey was the public affairs officer for the Corps of Engineers' Mississippi Valley Division. Chuck Minsker, Jim Pogue and Susan Jackson work in the public affairs offices of, respectively, the Huntington, Memphis and Nashville districts.



From the division operations center in Vicksburg, Miss., the response plan that had been rehearsed and executed numerous times was kicked into action from Corps district offices up and down the Mississippi Valley. And from on board the motor vessel *Mississippi*, the Corps' huge flagship vessel, the "fight" to deal with Hurricane Katrina's wrath began.

BG Robert Crear, Mississippi Valley Division commander, was on board the vessel and began conducting preparatory operations from there. As a native Mississippian from Vicksburg, he understood what a huge storm

▶ Residents of Chalmette waded in floodwaters while inspecting houses near the two pumping stations refueled by Soldiers of the 206th and 647th Trans. companies.



SFC Gwendolyn Coley (All this page)

▲ A 647th Transportation Company HEMMTT crosses in front of a flooded canal in Chalmette, La., east of New Orleans, as it heads to refuel the 20,000-gallon tanks at the water pumping station.

set up emergency operations.

Like so many people living along the Gulf Coast, engineers not involved in the actual fight were told to get out of harm's way. That meant the New Orleans District, which normally has approximately 1,200 employees managing the Corps' projects throughout Louisiana, went from a full-up operational district to about 100 crisis-team members, who would eventually find themselves in a fight to save their beloved city.

And while the Vicksburg District personnel began hosting their neighbors from the southernmost district, they also began making preparations to secure Corps assets in their territory and plan their response to the storm that would eventually cause massive damage up to 150 miles inland.

Some critical decisions were made as it became clear that this was no ordinary storm. First, *Mississippi* was docked at the Port of Vicksburg. She would be the floating command center for the MVD fight in Louisiana and Mississippi. The quarter boats used by the Vicksburg, Memphis and St. Louis districts to house personnel during dredging operations would be rerouted south

in the Mississippi and Louisiana Gulf coast could do. He had conducted a recent hurricane-preparedness exercise with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, so the plan appeared solid and executable.

Even with a trained meteorologist on the staff, the one thing that couldn't be predicted was the severity and track of the storm.

Through the weekend the six district offices — including St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; and the two districts to be most impacted, Vicksburg and New Orleans, La. — began to execute their plans.

After determining the projected path of the storm, the New Orleans District crisis-team members were moved up to the Vicksburg District to



▲ Amid debris washed onto the wharf near Pumping Station 6 in Chalmette, SGT Gabriel Shack of the 287th Trans. Co. prepares to refuel the station's generator tank.

to house hundreds of Corps personnel. Once the level of the disaster was known, those employees would join the other federal responders.

The Corps districts in the middle of the fight, Vicksburg and New Orleans, began to execute their pre-dec-

The Corps of Engineers Overall Response





As the first wave of the storm passed, it looked like New Orleans had escaped the worst of it. But Katrina was a Category 4 storm...

laration missions under the National Response Plan. It was a challenge to get those emergency-support functions in place, so that services could be provided to the people who remained in flood-ravaged areas.

The respective emergency-operations centers began issuing tasking orders, alerting primary-response team members for movement, and scheduling FEMA's requirements for Corps support.

▼ The Gentilly neighborhood in New Orleans was typical of the areas inundated by hurricane-driven floodwaters.

On the other side of the district, the Vicksburg battle staff prepared for Katrina. Like the folks from New Orleans, they wondered whether friends, family, other loved ones, and the homes they grew up in or would eventually retire to would be left standing in the morning.

Katrina moved north throughout the day, and spirits for a better-than-expected outcome moved south. Orders continued throughout the day, as Crear brought his battle staff together and issued new guidance as the situation changed.

Then Katrina hit.

Gulfport, Miss.

"It was like being surrounded by locomotives," said SPC Richard Pack, who had a ringside seat for Hurricane Katrina. He weathered it in a shelter just two blocks from the shore in Gulfport — one of the areas hardest hit by the storm.

Pack and his squad of Army engineers watched Katrina move in.

Outside the shelter, Katrina struck full force. When the storm passed,

the engineers stepped out into the street and saw a different landscape. The high winds and storm surge left widespread destruction. Debris filled the streets. Houses were leveled. Trees were ripped up by the roots, or snapped in half. A gigantic floating casino was lifted up and dropped on the shore a block away from downtown.

"I was in the Gulf War," Pack said, "but I've never seen anything like this."

The Soldiers immediately went to work, and their first priority was saving lives. "The first few days we did search and rescue, going house to house," Pack said.

"One woman had stayed in her home during the last hurricane and had no problem, so she decided to take her chances and stay again," he said. "When the storm hit, water started pouring into her house, so she sat on the kitchen counter. As the water kept going up, her refrigerator started floating, so she held onto it. The water was about a foot from the ceiling when it stopped rising."

The reception the engineers

SFC Gwendolyn Coley (both)





received was the same at each house. “They were glad to see us coming,” Pack said.

More than a week after the storm, Pack and his squad were still at work in Glenport, Miss., clearing debris from the streets.

New Orleans, La.

As the first wave of the storm passed, it looked like New Orleans had escaped the worst of it. But Katrina was a Category 4 storm — and the levees were only built to withstand a Category 3.

The day after Katrina passed, the levees were breached in several places, and water began to fill the city. For the members of the New Orleans Crisis-Response Team, their worst nightmare had become reality.

The job facing the Corps employees was two-fold. The levee breaches would have to be closed, and then

floodwaters could be pumped out of the city.

Mission manager Mike Zumstein was among the Corps employees heavily involved in the pumping operation. The New Orleans District mechanical engineer’s home was just a few blocks from the 700-foot breach in the 17th Street Canal levee.

Zumstein said he and his wife, Debora, grabbed a few personal items and their two cats and headed north for Memphis at 2 a.m. Sunday before Katrina’s Monday landfall.

Zumstein and a cadre of other displaced people assembled in the Memphis District’s emergency-operations center and began developing plans for pumping out the water.

A few days later they moved south to Baton Rouge, La., and then to New Orleans, operating out of one of the Corps’ deployable tactical-operations centers.

▲ SPC Jose Stallworth guides the hose as his vehicle prepares to refuel one of two 20,000-gallon tanks at the water-pumping stations in Chalmette.

Slow and painful as it may have seemed, the “dewatering” team began making progress.

Attacking Breaches

Nonstop convoys of 20-ton trucks delivered sand, gravel and large rocks to areas on the 17th Street Canal, where access roads had to be built to the breach there. The road was then forked from that location and built to reach the London Avenue Canal breach. Crews then turned their attention to building a road to a second breach area at Mirabeau Road. In mid-September Corps contractors were building about 500 feet of roadway

The Corps of Engineers Overall Response





Chuck Minsker (both this page)

▲ A dismantled sailboat sits high and dry near a Gulfport marina battered by high winds and storm surge.

per day.

The next step at the 17th Street Canal, and later the London Avenue Canal, was to cut off flow from Lake Pontchartrain into the canal. Corps contractors drove 150 feet of steel piling across the canal to seal it.

Meanwhile, Texas Army National Guard Chinook and Black Hawk helicopter crews placed an average of 600 7,000-pound sandbags each day into the breaches. Depending on the helicopter's lift capability, Corps riggers averaged one to three hookups every two minutes during daylight hours. Sandbagging operations ran 24 hours for 10 days and, with the breaches complete, were halted Sept. 10. Several crane barges

were also used to place sandbags and gravel, and other barges were used to haul equipment, pumps, generators and people to sites.

"We did everything we could do to bring in the right equipment, materials and resources to expedite these breach closures," said COL Richard P. Wagenaar, New Orleans District commander. *[See related story about levee repairs.]*

"I'm proud of these people. They've lost a lot, some of them are

without homes themselves, but they're putting their hearts into this mission and exceeding my expectations," he said. "I can't say enough about their dedication and determination."

Shift in Mission Focus

Though the mission of repairing pumping stations and ordering and placing auxiliary pumps was an ongoing operation, on Sept. 8 it became the primary focus. Wagenaar's goal all along was to have pumping operations

➤ National Guard Soldiers help a Coast Guardsman load bags of ice onto a truck for transport to a senior-citizens home in Gulfport.





begin as soon as the breaches were closed. And they did. Draining began at the 17th Street Canal site Sept. 5 and at the London Canal location Sept. 10.

The Corps concentrated its portable pumps and generators at canal locations to support the ongoing draining by pumps in the southern areas of the water basins. As the canals leading to the pump stations cleared, the Corps, contractors and local water board authorities were beginning to repair the pumps that were under water or otherwise crippled by Hurricane Katrina. The local power company was also working with authorities to provide electricity to specific pump-station grids. As canal waters receded and more power was restored, more pump stations became operational.

In the New Orleans area 148 pumps needed repair. By Sept. 10 some 26 pumps were pumping 9,125 cubic feet per second, and 39 portable pumps were pumping 723 cubic feet per second. In addition, nine of 26 existing pumps in Plaquemines Parish were operating at 1,360 cubic feet per second.

Aftermath

Across Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, the military was ready to offer its assistance. At Camp Shelby, Miss., Joint Task Force Katrina was set up Aug. 31 as the Department of Defense's focal point to support FEMA's relief efforts along the Gulf Coast.

LTG Russel Honoré, First U.S. Army commander, headed up the task force to coordinate DOD active-duty support for disaster-relief efforts in the hurricane's aftermath, much of it already under way.

Part of that JTF was Task Force Engineer, headed by BG Bruce Berwick. Its job was to coordinate with FEMA to arrange for shipments of ice



and drinking water, restore power and basic utilities, remove debris, clear transportation routes and arrange for temporary housing.

At the Memphis District, District Commander COL Charles O. Smithers III oversaw those mission areas.

"The numbers are staggering," Smithers said of the debris-removal effort. "We're talking about 103 million cubic yards of debris in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Leading a force of volunteers from Corps districts as far flung as Portland, Ore.; Buffalo, N.Y., and Wilmington, N.C.; employees spent 12 hours a day in the scorching Louisiana sun, watching hundreds of trucks roll in and out of the debris sites. Employees conducted quality-assurance assessments and kept records of the workers' efforts.


Temporary roofing — more popularly known as the Blue Roof Program — was also a big focus for the Memphis District.

In this case, volunteers from the Omaha, Kansas City, New Orleans and

▲ After helping to tear down tents at New Orleans' Louis Armstrong International Airport, SGT Michael Harris carries a tent to a waiting truck.

other districts secured rights of entry from homeowners requesting temporary roofing, then provided quality-assurance services after contractors had installed sturdy plastic sheeting.

After the storm, New Orleans District realty specialist Geanette Kelley temporarily found herself with nowhere to work. Once she learned that her own home had suffered minimal damage, Kelley volunteered to work with rights of entry for temporary roofing. Kelley said she planned to continue working on the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort as long as she was needed.

For Corps employees and volunteers in the stricken Gulf Coast region, that's the bottom line — to help the storm victims for as long as they need help. 

The Corps of Engineers Overall Response





KATRINA
HURRICANE RELIEF

Restoring the

Story by Heike Hasenauer Photos by Lane Lefort



Levees



FOR residents of New Orleans, La., life in the “Big Easy” hasn’t been easy for a long time — certainly not since Aug. 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina came barreling into town with 127-mph winds.

Before that, many residents say folks enjoyed leisurely days when they could walk down the streets in their neighborhoods, wave to neighbors as they passed by or stopped to converse awhile about simpler things than the long-lasting impacts of Katrina and the government’s continuing efforts to rebuild the devastated city.

On that fateful August day, the high winds and floodwaters damaged or destroyed some 169 miles of the 325-mile hurricane-protection system that was supposed to protect New Orleans but left most of the once popular tourist destination under water.

The New Orleans District Corps of Engineers, led by district commander COL Richard Wagenaar, has been working for months to restore the

▲ A Texas Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk lowers a 7,000-pound sandbag into a breach in a floodwall south of Lake Pontchartrain.



▲ Richard Pinner (at top left) of the Corps of Engineers’ New Orleans District talks with a contractor about the installation of pilings at the end of the 17th Street Canal.

12- to 17-foot levee system before the start of the 2006 hurricane season this month.

“Restoring the levees is our number-one mission right now,” said Wagenaar, who oversaw the work of 271-person Task Force Guardian, composed of 142 Army civilians from the New Orleans District and 129 civilian employees from other COE district offices.

The Corps’ job is to restore the levees to their pre-hurricane state, that is, to withstand a Category 3 storm with winds of 90 to 115 miles per hour, said Wagenaar.

Corps contractors who are performing the work are additionally

Restoring the Levees





▲ Anthony Bertucci of the New Orleans District Construction Division calls in the status of the floodwall at the London Canal's second breach.

building temporary floodgates and pump stations to prevent storm surge from entering the three outfall canals, Wagenaar said.

A new and improved levee system is still a possibility for the future. Some of the district's employees have been conducting a hurricane-protection analysis to develop a full range of flood-control, coastal-restoration and hurricane-protection measures for south Louisiana for Category 5 protection, Wagenaar said.

Their interim report is due to Congress this month and will be followed by a final technical report for Category 5 protection by December 2007.

In total, 50 percent of the New Orleans District's 1,150 employees are working directly on hurricane-recovery missions, Wagenaar said.

Much of New Orleans is still littered with debris. And while some 450,000 people inhabited the city before Hurricane Katrina came through, only about 150,000 have returned, he said.

Many are waiting for better protection from an improved levee system.

Others are waiting for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide flood maps that clearly indicate where potential future danger exists.

"People don't want to start rebuilding homes and businesses until they understand

the ground rules," Wagenaar said.

At the height of the Corps' hurricane-response involvement, as many as 4,500 Corps employees were working on-site in the New Orleans area and had come from the Corps' 45 district offices around the world, including Afghanistan and Iraq, Wagenaar said.

"Blue roofs," the temporary blue-tarp fixes to damaged roofs in New Orleans had been completed in March, with 95,000 roofs covered. Debris removal was 45 percent complete, and the installation of public facilities, such as schools, police stations and hospitals continued, Wagenaar said.

Consider that a Port-a-Pot — something known to every Soldier who's ever been out in the field — measures about two cubic yards, "we've cleaned up roughly seven million Port-a-Pots," Wagenaar said.

Additionally, as of early March, Task Force Guardian had awarded all 59 contracts and was overseeing the work of 10 major

construction companies, Wagenaar said.

Many of its employees are putting in 18-hour workdays, seven days a week. Contractors, too, are working 24-7 to get the levees rebuilt, Wagenaar said.

"Right from the start, the day after the storm hit, we got contractors into New Orleans, to stop the flooding," Wagenaar said. "Our biggest challenge was developing a plan for how we were going to move ahead, because the magnitude of what we've seen here in New Orleans has never been

At the height of the Corps' hurricane-response involvement, as many as 4,500 Corps employees were working on-site in the New Orleans area.

➤ Interlocking steel sheet pilings are pounded into the 17th Street Canal to block the flow from Lake Pontchartrain.



Restoring the Levees



seen before in the United States.

"Ninety percent of the people in my district are from New Orleans, so they're working in their own backyards to clean up debris and bring about normalcy," Wagenaar said.

Thankfully, no employees from the New Orleans District were killed as a result of the hurricane. But three weeks went by before all of them were accounted for, Wagenaar said.

"It's challenging and often frustrating working to repair the hurricane's damage. You just want to get it done," Wagenaar said. "Some people

say 30 to 40 years from now you'll still be able to see signs of Hurricane Katrina here."

Government funding and the Corps presence should be a clear indication that life will continue to improve for Hurricane Katrina victims who have returned to the area.

The district's typical annual budget for projects is about \$350 million, Wagenaar said. After Katrina the figure skyrocketed to \$3 billion.

For years — long after the completion of the levees — the New Orleans District will be working to return the

city to as close to its original state as possible, he added.

Meantime, the first celebration of Mardi Gras since the disaster showed people around the world that the fighting spirit of the people of the Big Easy is alive and well.

When the annual event was held in February, "tourists believed it was a party," Wagenaar said. "For the people who live here — myself included — it was a celebration that we're returning to normalcy. There were definitely fewer people, but they were just as exuberant as in the past." 📺





KATRINA
HURRICANE RELIEF

The Corps' Continuing Mission

Story by Dona Fair
and Rich Lamance
Photos by
Daren Reehl

THE Corps of Engineers missions following hurricanes Katrina and Rita have changed over the months, with the need for water and ice, temporary housing and mortuary affairs either wrapped up or diminished.

"Our missions started with providing water, ice and temporary power. Then we moved into the temporary roofing and debris-removal operations," said Dan Hitchings, director of Task Force Hope. "The roofing projects are finished, so we're now concentrating our efforts on the last stages of debris removal, putting up temporary public structures and providing some school rooms and buildings to keep local schools open."

COL Dwight Pearson, commander of the Baton Rouge Recovery Field

Dona Fair and Rich Lamance work for the Army and Air Force Hometown News Service.



Office, said the Corps' debris-removal efforts are the largest in U.S. history, far overshadowing similar efforts following some of the largest hurricanes on record.

"To put things in perspective, Hurricane Andrew left about 15 million cubic yards of debris. Before Katrina, it was the most devastating event we've had in the United States," Pearson said. "Our total in Louisiana is going to be around 40 million cubic yards, seven million of those in New Orleans alone."

For the Gulf coast, officials estimate that more than 120 million cubic yards of debris will be removed.

The scope of debris removal spans more than 500 miles and 87,000 square miles in parts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama. Dick Aldrich, who manages debris removal efforts in some of the hardest hit counties in coastal Mississippi, said the Corps' primary responsibility is to clear right-of-way areas to allow access to hospitals, gas stations, and grocery stores and get residents on a path to normalcy. A secondary mission is to obtain right-of-entry permission from residents before debris removal or demolition can begin.

John Fogarty, who is responsible for debris and demolition operations for Orleans, Plaquemines and parts of St. Bernard parishes in Louisiana, said there is also a dangerous and tragic side of clean-up operations. "In New Orleans we've identified about 120 structures in the public right of way that have been labeled an imminent health and safety threat. These are



blocking streets, power poles and lines that have been knocked over — areas that cause immediate safety concerns."

The most challenging and dangerous part of their job is in the most devastated area of New Orleans, the Ninth Ward.

"Because of the total devastation in this area, there's still the potential to find human remains, so we work with urban search-and-rescue teams with dog teams that go in and 'sniff out' the areas," said Fogarty.

"A lot of the structures are still in bad shape and many still can't be accessed. We tag the structures as green, yellow or red. A green structure can be easily accessed and can be marked for demolition," he said.

A yellow tag indicates that dog teams came up with conflicting results. That's because of what might still be inside refrigerators and freezers or because of dead animals, he said.

"If a structure is tagged 'red,' the teams have a strong sense that human remains are in the building. Officials then review a missing persons' list to see if anyone who lived in the structure is listed as missing," Fogarty said.

"When we take buildings down, we never bulldoze them," he added. "We use excavators and grapple hooks to grab material and pull the pieces apart."

The worst kind of demolition,

▲ SFC Carl Childs, a municipal coordinator for Task Force Hope, explains to Mike DeRusha the procedures for debris removal in Harrison County, Miss. Corps of Engineers personnel are working closely with contractors throughout the rebuilding effort.

according to Fogarty, is tearing down many of the older homes that contain large amounts of asbestos. That's when perimeter barriers are put up and only trained personnel with respirators and suits can go in. The materials are placed in special trucks with lined bags and are hauled to a regulated site and disposed of properly.

Aldrich said that while he sees media reports with a negative focus on the demolition and clearing of many homes, the clearing of homes for many homeowners means just the opposite.

"You see the people before their homes are demolished and debris is taken away, and they seem like they have no direction — that they don't know what to do," Aldrich said. "But as soon as their lot is cleared, their facial expression changes and they seem to have new hope and direction." It's as though they can see a new house or a "For Sale" sign in the yard, he said.

◀ Contractor employees pour concrete into a form for a wall designed to shore up a levee in New Orleans' ravaged Ninth Ward. The project is in an area completely destroyed by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The Corps Continuing Mission





Today, the Army Corps of Engineers' most ambitious project involves repairing the 169 miles of damaged levees surrounding New Orleans.

COL Lewis Setliff III is the commander of Task Force Guardian, a force made up of 200 engineers and volunteers who have the daunting task of getting and keeping the city dry.

"We began assessing the damage in mid September and it took a month of aerial assessments before we actually began rebuilding efforts," he said. "We're repairing what was a catastrophic failure in the Ninth Ward of the I-wall, which is basically a wall

▶ Refrigerators, stoves and other destroyed appliances from the Ninth Ward are piled high at a landfill just outside New Orleans.

▶ A contractor sprays down the ruins of a Ninth Ward home as it is demolished. The spraying helps keep asbestos dust and chemical residues from entering the air.

of concrete and sheetrock, and replacing it with a T-wall – a much more stable structure that will provide better protection against a hurricane."

He added that the Mississippi River levee, which is designed to keep the river from flooding, is complete and the project is moving forward on schedule to get the hurricane protection system in place before the new hurricane season begins this month.

Jim Ward, the deputy director for Task Force Hope, said that before rebuilding efforts began, the Corps had the responsibility of closing off the levee breaches and working with local officials to get all pumps operating at full capacity. "It took 53 days to get all the water out, with a big part out in about three weeks. That was a lot faster than expected. Then Hurricane Rita came along and re-flooded about 40 percent of the city.

"Most of the flooding occurred in the Ninth Ward. The water came





over the flood wall so fast it collapsed the wall, causing major damage,” Ward said.

Today, a drive into the city can be deceiving, Ward said. “If you come from the airport, you get a false sense of what the city’s like. You come across the river and you still don’t see much damage.

“But as you drive east, you see houses that kind of look OK, but then you realize that the doors are open and everything has been ripped out of the insides and there’s no one there,” Ward continued. “Every once in awhile, you’ll see a FEMA trailer or a blue roof, but on a normal weekday you won’t see any activity. The week-ends are busy, because people come back and are trying to rebuild.”

Hitchings has seen his share of hurricanes over the past three decades and believes New Orleans will rebuild in much the same fashion as affected cities of the past. “There is a high demand for the American public to not only visit New Orleans, but to engage in commerce as well. If you look out the window, you see the river and one of the most important natural ports in the nation. The fisheries in Louisiana provide 30 percent of the seafood



◀ (Far left) Wearing a protective mask and oversuit, a worker prepares to enter a destroyed home to ensure it doesn’t contain hazardous materials.

◀ (Left) A dump truck deposits dirt in an area being shored up as part of a land-side levee enlargement project in Plaquemines Parish.



consumed in the United States.

Much of America’s oil production is supported here through its refineries, and for that demand to be met, you have to have places to live, places to go to school, places to worship, and I expect those places to be rebuilt and come back stronger than ever before. ☐

▲ Fallen trees are loaded aboard a flat-bed truck before being hauled away from a damaged area in Harrison County, Miss.

The Corps Continuing Mission





KATRINA
HURRICANE RELIEF

The National Guard's

Fi



▲ An Army Guard helicopter crewman looks out on New Orleans' flooded streets as his aircraft prepares to land at the Superdome on Sept. 3, 2005.

next Hour

Story by MSG Bob Haskell

"THIS was our finest hour," LTG H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, told people across America after the Guard's initial response to Hurricane Katrina in September.

Based on how well the National Guard performed during the worst natural disaster of America's worst hurricane season, no one in the National Guard's official hierarchy doubts that the Guard could step up and do it again.

Katrina was much more than another hurricane for the National Guard. It was a cause — a national call to domestic "arms" that will be remembered for years to come, Guard officials said.

While Guard members also responded to hurricanes Rita and Wilma during the same devastating period in the Southeast, Katrina defined the collective Guard-response operations.

It led to the largest and fastest deployment of U.S. forces for a domestic crisis in this country's history and in the National Guard's 369 years as the nation's first-line militia force. Nearly 60,000 Guard members answered the call.

Every one of the 54 states and territories with National Guard assets — including medical, engineer, ground transportation, aviation, communications and infantry — sent their people and equipment to Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas. Guard Soldiers in those states reported for duty knowing that their homes were damaged or destroyed and that their families were scattered to the four winds.

Ssg John Jackson of the Louisiana Guard, for example, was on duty at the Superdome,



MSG Bob Haskell works at the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office.

which was surrounded by a smelly cesspool three nights after Katrina struck early on Aug. 29. Jackson's house, located in another part of New Orleans, was under water, but his five children were safe with his parents in New Boston, Texas.

Responding to hurricanes is nothing new for the National Guard. The Guard has planned for natural-disaster contingencies for decades. It responds to virtually every hurricane that makes landfall every year. But the magnitude of this response defied imagination.

The equivalent of three Army divisions hit the ground within four days, said Dan Donohue, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau. That was a bigger response than the invasions of Grenada in 1983 or Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989, he said.

The Air National Guard trans-

ported the Soldiers via armadas of aircraft that descended on airports in Belle Chasse, La., and Gulfport, Miss. The streams of C-130s that were constantly landing, unloading and taking off again made that part of the mission look like the Berlin Airlift of 1948-1949.

Guard troops were rescuing people four hours after the storm brushed by New Orleans, flattened Gulfport and Biloxi, Miss., and flooded Mobile, Ala. The Guard then rescued many more people from floodwaters in New Orleans and hauled sandbags with its helicopters to repair the city's levees.

All told, the governors of the states and territories sent 58,000 troops to the Gulf Coast under the provisions of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact that makes it possible for Guard forces to respond to crises in other states.

"It is important to remember that there are more than 300,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who are



▲ Alabama Guard Soldiers load cases of baby formula aboard a truck carrying a variety of relief supplies into Pascagoula, Miss.

not deployed overseas. And they are available for relief and security efforts in the United States, should they be necessary," Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told the media on Sept. 6.

"These men and women in uniform are demonstrating the full depth of the compassion of the American

▼ The storm surge generated by Hurricane Katrina did massive damage along the Gulf Coast, causing widespread flooding throughout the area.





people. They're risking their lives as they work around the clock. And I join in expressing appreciation and great respect for their tireless efforts," Rumsfeld said.

"Your response to the hurricanes was magnificent. Not flawless, but magnificent nonetheless," Blum told a gathering of National Guard state adjutants general a couple of months later. "No one in this room balked. Not a single governor said 'No.'"

The governors had the authority to demonstrate how well EMAC can work. They used that authority to help their fellow Americans.

The National Guard Bureau, in turn, identified where the troops and equipment were needed and arranged for the transportation to get them there as quickly and in as orderly a fashion as possible.

"Puerto Rico sent 1,200 members of its National Guard force to the Gulf Coast," Blum said. "That's remarkable, because Puerto Rico sits in 'hurricane alley.' It had to remain ready to deal with its own hurricanes."

Army and Air Guard members

rescued more than 17,000 hurricane victims and evacuated 70,000 whose homes were destroyed or damaged. They distributed food, water and ice to countless others who found themselves trapped in the Superdome and the New Orleans convention center, and who were trying to survive along the Mississippi coast.

Troops were sent to all nine affected parishes in Louisiana and to every afflicted county in Mississippi. Although the numbers declined significantly by the New Year, some Guard members were still on duty, helping with the cleanup, through March 1.

The effort was not without a price.

The Mississippi Guard's SGT Josh Russell, 27, of Petal, Miss., was killed the day Katrina hit when his vehicle struck road debris on I-59, following a search-and-rescue mission. He was a member of Company A, 890th Engineer Battalion, in Lumberton.

Others worked long hours because they knew their people needed help.

"We were flying an incredible number of hours. But how can you sleep at your house knowing that

people are sleeping on the sidewalk?" asked CW2 Jacob Dreher, a Black Hawk pilot with the Louisiana Army Guard's 1st Bn., 244th Aviation Regt.


"When we first started, I couldn't think about anything else that was going on," Dreher added. "I had to go get survivors."

The National Guard brought something extra to its mission of supporting local, state and federal civilian authorities. Combat experience. Dreher's battalion, for example, had returned from a year of active duty in Iraq the previous February. And many members of the Louisiana Guard's 256th Brigade Combat Team were pressed into service soon after they came home from Iraq.

The Guard had the trucks and supplies to help transport some of the thousands of people who found themselves holed up in the Superdome and the New Orleans convention center. The Superdome became the place from which stranded residents were told they could get transportation out of the city.

The Guard delivered more supplies to the Superdome and convention center as the crowds grew, and helped the New Orleans Police Department move people out of the two locations on Sept. 2, said MG Bennett Landreneau, Louisiana's adjutant general.

LTG Russel Honoré, the commander of Joint Task Force Katrina, told reporters early in the operation that the National Guard Soldiers "work the security mission as described by law, under their governor, and the JTF provides support, with air assets for search-and-rescue as well as seaborne capability. It's a total effort."

It was that total effort that contributed to the National Guard's "finest-hour" response. 



▲ Guard members unload casualties evacuated from New Orleans aboard an Air Guard C-130H Hercules. The Guard played a vital role in moving the sick and injured.

The National Guard's Finest Hour





KATRINA
HURRICANE RELIEF

Katrina Lessons



▲ SSG James Bock of the Georgia Army National Guard's 131st Aviation Regiment watches as his CH-47 drops sandbags into a levee breach.

Learned



Story by MAJ Les Melnyk



PHT (AW) Brian Aho, USN

HURRICANE Katrina will go down as the costliest storm in U.S. history, and one of the deadliest on record. It also triggered the largest-ever response to a domestic emergency by the National Guard.

Four hours after the storm passed, the Guard was in the water, on the streets and in the air saving lives. By Sept. 8, more than 51,000 Guard Soldiers and airmen were responding to the crisis — more than three times the previous record for a natural disaster.

Even more remarkable was the scope of the Guard's response. Before it was over, the governors of every U.S. state and territory, as well as the District of Columbia, sent troops to the Gulf Coast. The willing cooperation of the nation's governors — who command the Guard when it is not in federal service — made it possible for the Guard to respond on this huge scale while simultaneously providing 79,000 troops for federal service in the war on terrorism.

Although the National Guard was lauded in congressional hearings as the most organized and well-prepared entity to respond to Hurricane Katrina, there were several lessons learned.

By far, the biggest problem the Guard faced in responding to Katrina was a lack of equipment — radios, medical gear, trucks, helicopters and bulldozers. The list encompasses nearly every item in the Guard's inventory. Quite simply, deploy-



MAJ Les Melnyk is the National Guard Bureau's historian.



Denise Gould

▲ National Guard members load a pallet of rations onto a truck for shipment to New Orleans in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

ments to Iraq and Afghanistan have taken a bad situation and made it worse.

Before Sept. 11, 2001, the Army National Guard had 76 percent of its required equipment. When Katrina struck, Guard units that were not mobilized for overseas service had less than 35 percent of their required equipment.

How did this happen? Units were stripped of their gear to ensure that units going overseas had everything they needed. Units returning from Iraq and Afghanistan often left their gear behind for follow-on forces, and what they kept was often worn out from hard use in a combat zone. Not enough money was budgeted to replace the damaged and left-behind equipment.

Of all the equipment shortages, the one that hurt most during Katrina was a lack of communications gear. With telephone lines and cell-phone towers down, troops had to rely on their tactical radios. Many Guard units were not issued SINCGARS radios, which are used nearly universally throughout the active Army, making communications with active-component troops difficult.

Satellite communications capability was sparse. Talking to civilian emergency responders was also a challenge, because the civilian agencies use different kinds of radios.

The communications situation could have been much worse, but fortunately for the Guard, satellite communications capability had greatly expanded since 9/11. By the time Katrina struck, most state Guards had organized 22-person civil support teams designed to assist civil authorities in responding to potential weapons-of-mass-destruction incidents.

Each CST has a unified command suite — a mobile communications van that can connect military and civilian radio networks and provide voice, data, Internet, and video uplinks that allow the commander at an incident site to contact anyone he or she needs to talk to, worldwide. More than 20 CSTs deployed their unified command suites to the Gulf Coast within the first month after Katrina struck.

► National Guard Soldiers use light armored vehicles to move through New Orleans' flooded streets while searching for stranded survivors.

The hurricane season of 2004, when Florida was thrashed by four hurricanes and a tropical storm, prompted the National Guard Bureau to begin fielding 13 satellite-communications systems for use in responding to domestic emergencies. These systems, known as the Interim Satellite Incident Site Communications Set, were exceptionally valuable, with many of the same communication capabilities as the CSTs possess.

Florida's ISISCS team was typical, deploying to Bay St. Louis, Miss., near where the eye of Katrina passed. The team supported three battalion-sized units that rotated through the area. When one unit requested assistance in boosting the range of their handheld radios, the ISISCS team was able to increase the range of the radios from two miles to 20 miles.

But the scale of the devastation caused by Katrina meant that those assets were not enough to get communications capability everywhere it was needed. In the aftermath, the Guard has recognized a need for more radio repeaters and satellite phones, to increase the range and reliability of communications, and more emphasis on communications gear that is com-





When Katrina struck, Guard units that were not mobilized for overseas service had less than 35 percent of their required equipment.

patible with civilian radios.

Largely as a result of communications gaps, it was difficult to get a common operating picture during the early phase of the crisis. As a result, different headquarters had conflicting information that slowed decision-making. Because disaster response is customarily handled at a state level, procedures for handling the response could cause confusion when transmitted to the national level.

“Lack of doctrinally correct reports, graphics and communications procedures caused duplications of effort, confusion and multiple requests for clarification of information,” according to the Guard Bureau’s after-action review of Katrina. Recognizing this problem, the annual exercises the Guard holds to prepare for civil emergencies will focus more on applying a single standard for all states.

In the heart of the crisis, headquarters in the affected area were flooded with requests for information. In some cases, these buildings were flooded, too. The state headquarters and operations center for the Louisiana Guard was located at historic Jackson Barracks, on the edge of the lower 9th



▲ Their vehicle a dry island amid New Orleans’ flooded streets, National Guard members prepare to move out on patrol.

PH3 Eric S. Garst, USN

Katrina Lessons Learned





Ward in New Orleans. Inundated by more than 10 feet of water on the day the storm hit, Guard members had to save themselves and their families, relocate their headquarters to higher ground, and still try to coordinate their own forces as well as the rapidly arriving forces from other states and the federal government.

One lesson drawn from that experience was the need for mobile communications suites that can keep a headquarters that is on the move in touch with the rest of the world. Another lesson was the need to be able to

▼ Using leased equipment, a National Guard engineer Soldier moves debris from the side of a road in Gulfport, Miss.

expand command-and-control capability in a crisis.

The Guard's solution during Katrina was to mobilize two Army National Guard division headquarters, assigning the 35th Infantry Division from Kansas to support Louisiana and the 38th Inf. Div. from Indiana to support Mississippi. In each case, because Guard members are accustomed to working under the direct control of civil authorities, the out-of-state Guard troops integrated quickly into the host-state command structures. The solution worked well and will probably be implemented again in the future.

A significant lesson learned from Katrina had to do with perceptions. Guard Soldiers are proud of the

service they performed during and after Katrina, and see it as part of a long tradition of helping their neighbors through fires, floods and earthquakes.

Yet, with more than three times as many Guard troops actually on the ground in Louisiana and Mississippi as all of the active-duty Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine personnel combined, Guard members were dismayed to find that the national media consistently portrayed them as active-duty Soldiers under the command of the federal Joint Task Force-Katrina commander, as opposed to Guard members from all 54 states and U.S. territories, under the control of the governors of the affected states.

Despite discussions early on be-

Chuck Minsker





▲ The devastation facing military and civilian recovery crews in Gulfport was best illustrated by this floating casino, washed ashore by wind and waves.

tween the governors of the Gulf Coast states and President George W. Bush, the National Guard was never federalized. Instead, close coordination took place among the various states and JTF-Katrina. “We had unity of effort, not unity of command,” said LTG H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

By staying in a state status, Guard Soldiers were empowered to enforce civil laws, something federal troops — including Guard members in federal service — are prohibited from doing, except under the provisions of the insurrection laws.

Fortunately, both the Pentagon and Congress are paying attention to the most serious problem exposed by Katrina — the lack of equipment. Beginning last fall, Congress authorized nearly \$1.3 billion, specifically aimed at making up the shortfall in equipment for homeland defense that the Guard has identified. Among the first items expected to be purchased will be SINCGARS radios and other desperately needed communications

gear. This is only a first step, however, in addressing a deficit of more than \$7 billion in missing equipment.

Katrina was a learning experience for tens of thousands of Guard Soldiers who responded. “When you called out the Guard for Katrina, you called out all of America,” Blum said last November to a congressional committee that investigated the Katrina response. While it was a mission the

Guard has performed for centuries, the scale was unprecedented. “There is not a single National Guard entity that did not make a contribution,” Blum said.

Given the regularity with which hurricanes strike the United States, and the same regularity with which the National Guard is called to respond, the lessons learned from Katrina are sure to have a long-lasting and positive impact for generations to come. 🚩



▲ A National Guard member helps direct motorists toward the evacuation route. Guard members were on duty both before and after the hurricane hit.

Katrina Lessons Learned





The Army's Proud Banner

Courtesy of the Institute of Heraldry

U.S. Army flags traditionally have been used to identify units and foster esprit de corps. Present policies on the use of flags stem from ideas and practices dating back to the Revolutionary War. Those were largely influenced by the military traditions of Western Europe.

The English, French, Dutch, Spanish and others brought to North America their flags, military uniforms and other official symbols. American colonial leaders were familiar with military traditions, particularly those of England and France.

With the Declaration of Independence and the formation of American military units came the need for items to identify Soldiers and their units. On Feb. 20, 1776, GEN George Washington's headquarters issued an order on flags, which read in part:

"Every Regiment should be furnished Colours, and that those Colours should ... bear some kind of [similarity] to the Uniform of the regiment to which they belong. The Number of the Regiment is to be mark'd on the Colours, and such a Motto, as the Colonel may choose... ."

By 1780, the stars-and-stripes design adopted by the United States in 1777 was generally known as the marine (maritime) flag and used extensively at sea, but no Army national flag had yet been adopted.

The first Army national flag was blue and incorporated

the design of an eagle and the name of the regiment. That national color of the Army was carried until 1841, when it became the regimental color. The eagle on regimental and battalion flags — and later on Army major command flags — evolved from that blue flag.

The current Army flag was dedicated and unfurled to the general public on June 14, 1956, at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pa., on the anniversary of the Army's establishment by the Continental Congress. The flag is inscribed in white letters on a scarlet scroll with the year 1775 in blue numerals below.

Battle Honors

Battle honors were first depicted by inscribing the names of battles on the organizational color or guidon. The practice became official when War Department General Order 19, dated Feb. 22, 1862, was enacted.

By 1890 the use of inscribed battle honors on the national and regimental colors was discontinued and engraved silver rings, now called silver bands, were authorized. This practice continued until 1918, when the silver bands were in short supply and the War Department authorized American Expeditionary Forces to locally procure ribbons and inscribe them with the names of special battles and major operations. These ribbon strips became the forerunners of our present-

The Army's Newest Streamers

Story by Denise Harris

ON Oct. 21, 2005, at the request of the Military Awards Branch, the secretary of the Army authorized award of campaign participation credit to eligible U.S. Army units that have served or are serving in the theater of operations in support of the global war on terrorism.

The streamers recognizing such participation will be added to the Army flag, bringing the total number of campaign streamers displayed on the flag to 178. Dates have traditionally been embroidered on Army flag campaign streamers, but since these new streamers will be displayed before the end of hostilities they will not include dates.

Denise Harris works in the office of the Chief of Policy, Army Military Awards Branch.


Today's campaign streamers

Today, campaign streamers two and three-quarter inches wide and four feet long are displayed on the Army flag. Streamers two and three-quarter inches wide and three feet long may be displayed by organizations authorized a distinguishing flag to indicate campaign participation credit.

The campaign streamers displayed on the Army flag include the date of the action, with the exception of the last four streamers. The latest streamers cover the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the global war on terrorism [see streamers at right].

day campaign streamers, and hand-embroidered silk streamers were introduced on June 3, 1920.

Unit-award streamers were also first authorized in 1920, when the War Department authorized the name of the battle to be embroidered on a blue silk streamer. The streamer was adopted to reflect organizations "Mentioned In Orders" by the War Department for meritorious service in action.

Streamers are affixed to the Army flag sequentially, counter-clockwise, from Lexington in 1775 to the most current. 

Afghanistan

For service in Afghanistan, under the criteria established for the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, units will receive and display a streamer embroidered "AFGHANISTAN." Each unit that has served in Afghanistan will be recognized with only one campaign streamer, regardless of the number of deployments or operational rotations it has made.

Iraq

For service in Iraq, under the criteria established for the Iraq Campaign Medal, units will display a streamer embroidered "IRAQ." Each unit that has served in Iraq will be recognized with only one campaign streamer regardless of the number of deployments or operational rotations to the country of Iraq.

Global War on Terrorism

In recognition of service in the other geographic regions outside Iraq and Afghanistan, such as Kuwait, Qatar and the Horn of Africa, units will receive a streamer in the colors of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Regardless of the geographic region, or the number of deployments, units participating in this campaign will receive a single streamer embroidered "Global War on Terrorism."

How Units Qualify

To qualify for campaign participation credit, units must have served within specific areas during specific time periods. For further information and instructions on how to apply for campaign participation credit and the three new streamers, visit the Military Awards Branch Web site at www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/awards/index.htm.



Vicenza's New Birthing Center

Story and Photos
by Lou Fioto

Construction of the birthing center was completed in May 2005 and the Benincaso Pavilion opened the following month.

THE Corps of Engineers is putting the finishing touches on the Dr. Frank V. Benincaso Mother and Infant Pavilion at Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy.

It's the only stand-alone birthing center within the Department of Defense, Corps officials said.

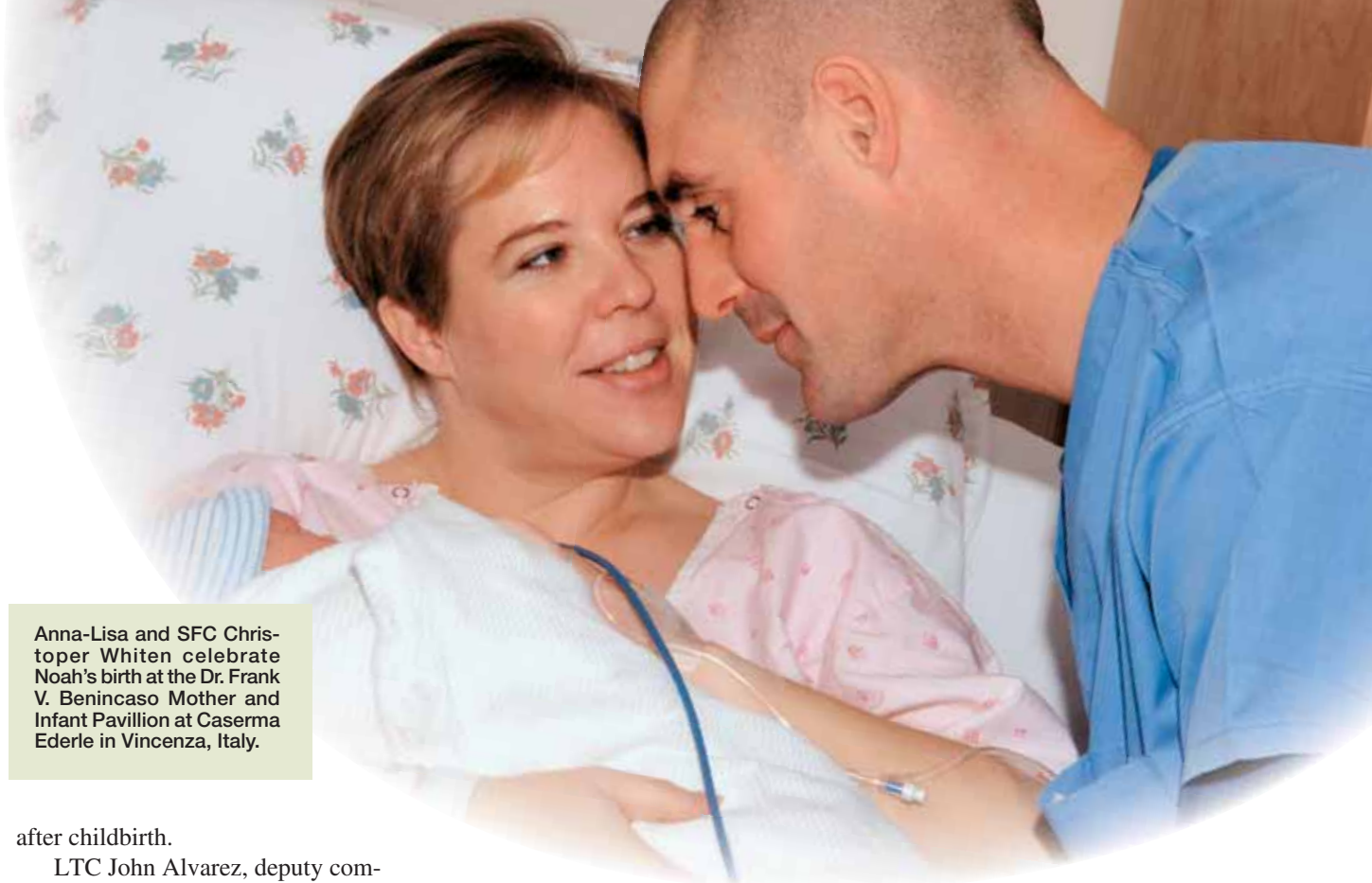
Thanks in part to the Corps' efforts, prospective new mothers eligible for U.S. military care in Italy can now be assured of a continuity of U.S.-standard health care before, during and

Lou Fioto works for the North Atlantic Division, Corps of Engineers Public Affairs Office.

Noah Whiten takes his first breath at 10:28 a.m., Jan. 26, 2006.



Taking



Anna-Lisa and SFC Christopher Whiten celebrate Noah's birth at the Dr. Frank V. Benincaso Mother and Infant Pavillion at Caserma Ederle in Vincenza, Italy.

after childbirth.

LTC John Alvarez, deputy commander of the Vicenza Health Clinic, said that before the facility was built, expectant mothers received prenatal care for the first seven to eight months of their pregnancies and then had to go elsewhere to deliver their babies and receive postnatal care.

New mothers had several options, but none of them were ideal for women who lived far from the authorized facilities. Some of them chose to go back to the States, Alvarez said. Others had their babies at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany or at Air Force facilities in Aviano, Italy. Others opted for the convenience of a host-nation hospital near where they lived.

Now, an expectant mother is treated by the same physician, obstetrician and gynecologist before, during and after the birth of her baby.

The Vicenza facility is very important to the morale of the Army family "because it provides a little piece of the United States in a foreign country," Alvarez said.

Anna-Lisa Whiten, who recently gave birth to a baby boy by Caesarean section, said she was able to have her C-section close to home, thanks to the birthing center, and she was confident that the staff was both compassionate and highly trained.

"The most positive aspect about having access to the center is knowing that it is here for us, to monitor our pregnancies," she said.

Alvarez said the clinic provides a familiar environment for Army families and takes away the fear that dealing with a foreign language could result in potentially harmful miscommunication.

At the birthing center, family support groups are also available to fill in gaps left by deployed fathers, Alvarez said.


Fathers in the twice-deployed, Italy-based Southern European Task Force, including the 173rd Infantry Brigade, know the importance of the

support groups. These Soldiers can now perform their missions minus much of the worries that might have plagued them before the birthing center was established, Alvarez said.

"That's because they know we are taking good care of their loved ones," he said.

Construction of the birthing center was completed in May 2005 and the Benincaso Pavilion opened the following month. It is named for Dr. Frank V. Benincaso, a pediatrician who worked for 13 years in the installation's health clinic and retired from the Army Medical Corps as a colonel after a 30-year Army career.

The pavilion provides full-services for mothers who are expected to have normal deliveries. It can also manage the birth and care of up to four babies daily.

High-risk pregnancies are still referred to appropriate medical facilities, Alvarez said. 

Good Care of Loved Ones



Training Tomo

Story by Bob Rosenburgh

Photos by Al Zdarsk

FORT Lewis, Wash., is once again the site of the annual Operation Warrior Forge exercise held annually by the U.S. Army Cadet Command.

Each year, for the three months of summer, the post's population grows by more than 8,000 people as 4,300 Army ROTC cadets are

joined by Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers and ROTC college staff members conducting the exercise.

About 1,500 Fort Lewis Soldiers and civilians support the event, which runs from June 3 through Aug. 11, while the rest of the crowd arrives from installations and colleges across the nation.

Fort Lewis has been the only site for Warrior Forge, also referred to as the Leader Development and Assess-

ment Course, since 1997. It brings together cadets from all 272 college ROTC programs within Cadet Command's jurisdiction and is the largest annual training exercise conducted by the Army.

"This is the single most important event in a cadet's military training," said COL Steven R. Corbett, Warrior Forge commander, "and the nexus of all campus-based training. We have gathered cadre and support staff from

Bob Rosenburgh is the Public Affairs Officer for Western Region Cadet Command.



A UH-60 Black Hawk from the Washington Army National Guard's 66th Aviation Brigade delivers a cadet rifle team to the Warrior Forge training site.

row's Leaders

across the nation to make this experience challenging and rewarding for every cadet.”

Twelve ROTC cadet regiments compose Warrior Forge 2006. Each is affiliated with an active-duty Army regiment, plus one Officer Candidate School regiment sponsored by the Washington Army National Guard.

The ROTC regiments each complete a 32-day training cycle.

Corbett said that lessons learned

in global Army operations have been used to improve the focus of training, which has become more rigorous over the years.

“We’ve added new training events, significantly modified others and increased the amount of time that cadets will spend in the woods of Fort Lewis,” Corbett said.

Army ROTC enrolls cadets through a variety of scholarship and nonscholarship programs that gener-

ally require between two and four years of college, with military science classes and a bachelor’s degree needed to qualify for commissioning as a second lieutenant.


The Simultaneous Membership Program has allowed Army National Guard and Army Reserve enlisted Soldiers to attend college ROTC while they’re assigned to a unit, but now a new initiative called the Green To Gold Active Duty Option allows

enlisted Soldiers to remain on active duty and draw full pay and allowances while attending up to two years of college while enrolled in ROTC on a scholarship.

The standard Green-to-Gold program, which can provide up to four years of tuition, requires the Soldier to first be discharged and then complete the ROTC program, re-entering service as an officer.

“The young men and women who have traveled from across our nation to attend Warrior Forge bring with them youth, energy and the will to win,” said Corbett. “The awesome responsibility of leading America’s sons and daughters is not one that is earned easily.”

And LDAC is not easy, although the training is designed to begin at a manageable pace and then pick up complexity and difficulty as it progresses, giving the cadets time to “get their heads into the game,” so to speak, Corbett said.

The mission of Warrior Forge is to train cadets and National Guard officer candidates to Army standards, develop leadership and evaluate officer potential. This is accomplished through a tiered training structure using light-infantry tactics as the focus of instruction. 

For more information about the Green to Gold Program Active Duty Option or other ROTC opportunities, go to www.goarmy.com/rotc or www.rotc.monroe.army.mil/scholarship_HP22/green/options.htm and select the active-duty option.

The Focus of Training

Story by Bob Rosenburgh

PROBLEM solving under stress is an inherent part of all Operation Warrior Forge cadet and officer-candidate training, officials said. The training program is sequential and progressive. It starts with individual training and leads to collective training, building from simple tasks to complex tasks.

1 Confidence Training. This block of instruction includes training in basic-combat water-survival techniques, rappelling, one-rope bridge training and a confidence/obstacle course. Confidence training challenges the cadets’ physical courage, build confidence in personal abilities and assist in overcoming fear.

2 Basic Rifle Marksmanship. It ensures that future Army leaders know the characteristics of the M-16 rifle, how to fire it accurately and how to employ it in combat.

Rifle marksmanship training teaches the cadets to engage and hit targets on the battlefield and requires them to fire for record. Qualification, with a score of 23 hits out of 40, is a camp-completion criterion.



The Warrior Forge Salute Battery fires its vintage 75mm pack howitzers at a regimental graduation ceremony.

3

Fire Support. The focus here is on the importance and lethality of artillery fire on the battlefield and employment of indirect fires. Each cadet is given the opportunity to perform the duties of howitzer crewman.



4

Land Navigation. This training must be mastered early in the camp cycle in order for cadets to be fully successful in the tactical training that follows. A passing score in land navigation is another LDAC-completion requirement.

5

First Aid. Learning first-aid techniques enhances the cadets' leadership skills by building confidence in their ability to react properly to battlefield wounds and threats of chemical-weapon attacks.

6

Individual Tactical Training.

The first block of instruction in tactics at LDAC covers individual battlefield skills, combat-move-ment techniques, and procedures necessary for subsequent tactical training at the squad and platoon levels.




7

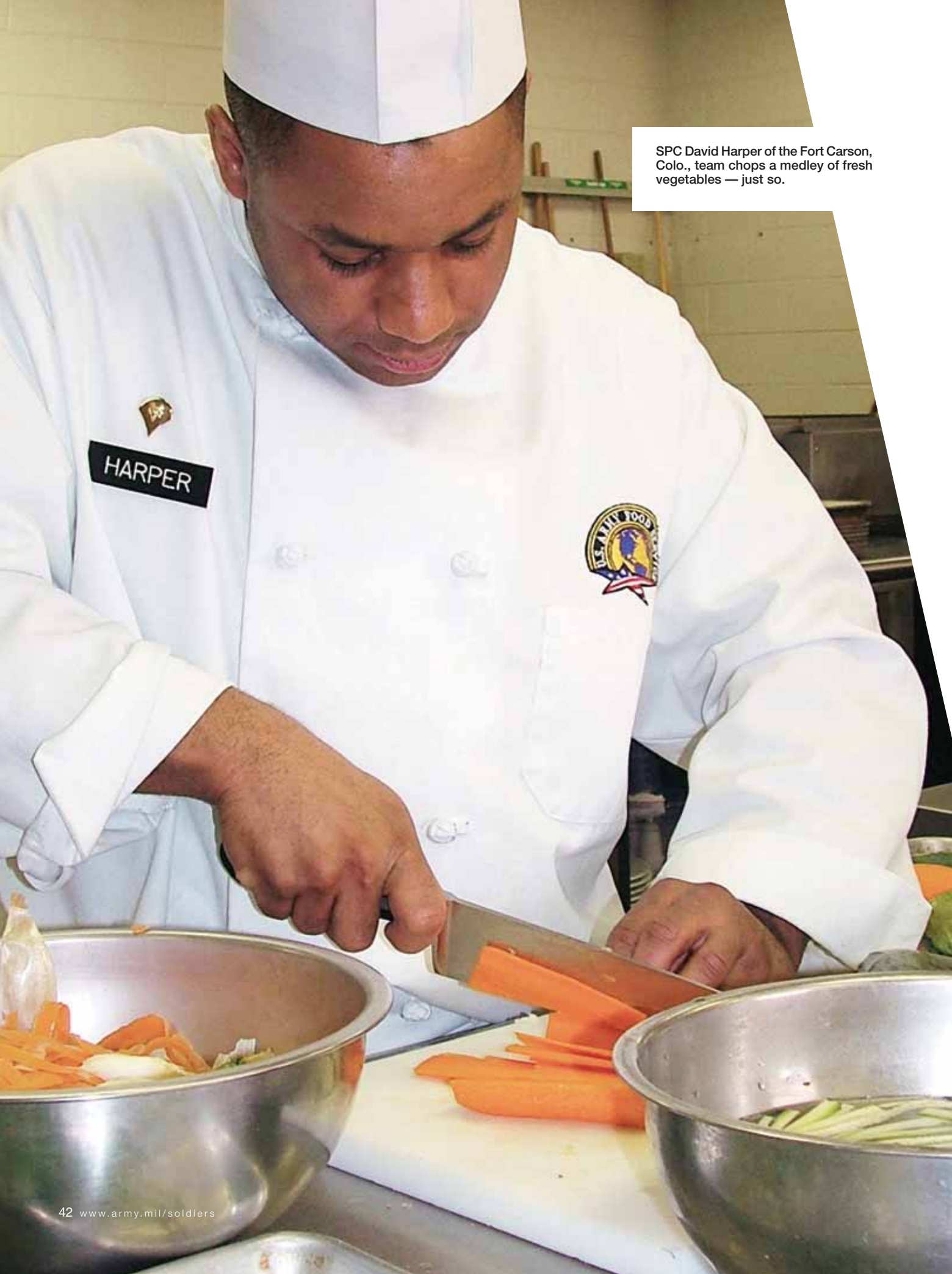
U.S. Weapons Training. This segment of instruction teaches the characteristics, functions and employment of the Army's primary infantry weapons. Cadets are introduced to such weapons as the M-240 light machine gun, M-2 .50-caliber machine gun, M-249 squad-automatic weapon and Mk. 19 grenade machine gun. This training provides skills used in later tactical phases of LDAC.

8

Squad Situational Training. This exercise teaches squad battle drills and collective tasks. It begins with a road march to the training area where cadets spend 10 days in the field.

Every year Warrior Forge helps Cadet Command provide about three-quarters of the Army's new officers, invigorates the local economy both on and off Fort Lewis, and provides added training to active-duty and reserve-component units, officials said. 





SPC David Harper of the Fort Carson, Colo., team chops a medley of fresh vegetables — just so.

Choosing the Army's Top Chefs

Story and Photos by Heike Hasenauer

IN the designated kitchens of the Quartermaster Center and School's food-service department at Fort Lee, Va., SPC Joseph Mussari and his brother SPC Anthony Mussari dug into the day's competition with gusto.

There was chicken to skin and quarter, shrimp to de-vein, vegetables and spices to sauté, and a half-dozen world-class food tasters to impress.

The brothers, both cooks with the 49th Quartermaster Group at Fort Lee, were competing in the 31st annual U.S. Army Culinary Arts Competition, a two-week event that brought together some 200 cooks from across the Army to compete in 14 competition categories.

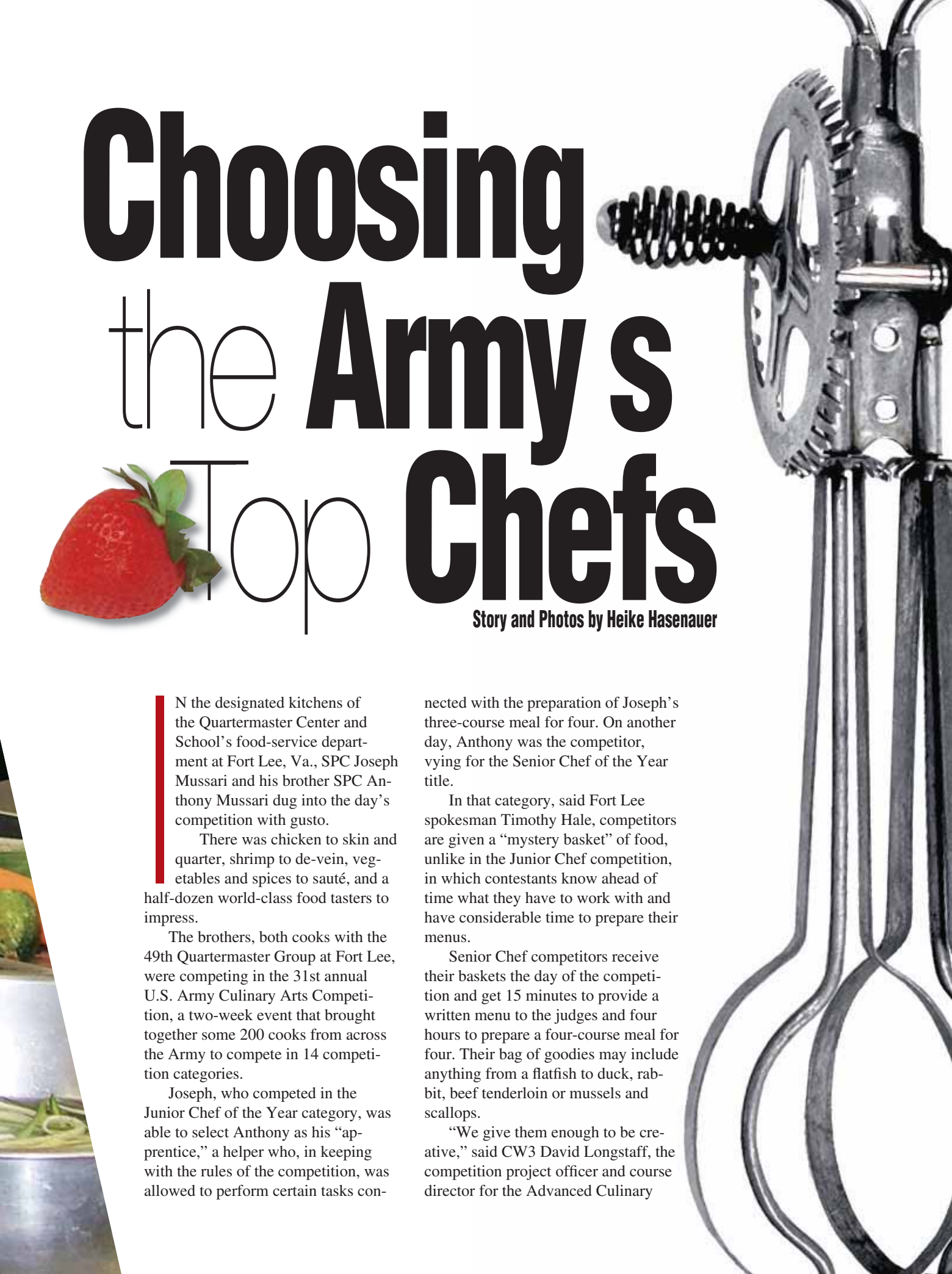
Joseph, who competed in the Junior Chef of the Year category, was able to select Anthony as his "apprentice," a helper who, in keeping with the rules of the competition, was allowed to perform certain tasks con-

nected with the preparation of Joseph's three-course meal for four. On another day, Anthony was the competitor, vying for the Senior Chef of the Year title.

In that category, said Fort Lee spokesman Timothy Hale, competitors are given a "mystery basket" of food, unlike in the Junior Chef competition, in which contestants know ahead of time what they have to work with and have considerable time to prepare their menus.

Senior Chef competitors receive their baskets the day of the competition and get 15 minutes to provide a written menu to the judges and four hours to prepare a four-course meal for four. Their bag of goodies may include anything from a flatfish to duck, rabbit, beef tenderloin or mussels and scallops.

"We give them enough to be creative," said CW3 David Longstaff, the competition project officer and course director for the Advanced Culinary





▲ Menus can be enhanced with any of a number of vegetables and fresh spices.



▲ SPC Porfirio Romero of Fort Bliss, Texas, “plates up” his entry before the clock runs out on the time to deliver the goods to the judges.

Skills Course at Fort Lee, which trains joint-service cooks who prepare meals for the president and other dignitaries at Camp David, aboard Air Force One and in the executive dining room at the Pentagon.

“Additionally, they can select anything from the dry-items rack and produce table to enhance their menus,” he said.

In another of the individual competition categories, contestants prepared elaborate confections, including desserts made with marzipan — the almond-paste concoction that requires much skill to mold and form.

“Among the most difficult things to do in the kitchen is make an excel-

lent sauce or stock and butcher a chicken to get the most use out of the bird,” Longstaff said. “The most time required in the competition is in the cold-food production category for buffet platters for show. It can take four to five days to produce one thing.”

Back in the kitchens, numerous gas burners were aflame, heating up such delicacies as basil- and pistachio-enhanced chicken breast, shrimp and avocado ravioli on wilted greens with sautéed lobster dressed in *buerre blanc*, and vanilla-bean soufflé presented with macerated pineapple and strawberries in a dark chocolate and grand marnier ganache.

A dozen or so cooks busied themselves with the many details of their selected menus, peeling potatoes, sautéing vegetables, mincing pineapple and chopping chocolate, knowing their food creations would be judged not only on how they tasted, but also on how they were presented.

Judges would also check the dimensions of some of the cut vegetables, to ensure they were in keeping with set standards.

Francesco Abbinanti, food and beverage director for the World Royal Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Fla. — and former executive chef for Walt Disney World Resorts — observed the competitors’ kitchen skills. As a floor judge, he checked whether competitors paid attention to sanitation in handling and cooking food, and whether they stuck to their menu synopses.

“If the contestant’s menu indicates something will be sautéed, it must be sautéed. If it’s supposed to be braised, it must be braised, and so forth,” Abbinanti said.

“There are nine mandatory categories for the teams in this competition,” Longstaff said. And each requires a progression of skills.

The American Culinary Federation sanctions the competition, and medals

earned by contestants earn them points toward chef certification, said Hale.

The competition — sponsored by the Army to promote growth in the culinary profession by encouraging cooks to focus on such aspects of food preparation as nutrition, presentation, creativity, economy and practicality — is open to active-duty members of all services, Defense Department civilians, and U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard members.

“There’s no high score or low score in the competition,” said Abbinanti. “We can award 10 gold medals or no gold medals.”

Thirty-five percent of the scoring comes from the floor judge’s observations on cooking techniques, sanitation, timing, and how the contestant worked with his or her apprentice. Wasting food costs points, too, Abbinanti said. Contestants shouldn’t



▲ SPC Derek Noble of Fort Lewis, Wash., cleans the lobster that will be part of his entry.



throw away chicken bones and poultry livers, for example. Those things can make a nice broth or gravy stock.

Sixty-five percent of the score is determined by the food-tasting judges — among the world’s leading chefs.

And the Winners Are ...

- Senior Army Chef of the Year: **SPC Jeffrey Lagyak**, Fort Bliss, Texas;
- Junior Army Chef of the Year: **CPL Randy Agno**, Team Hawaii;
- Field Cooking Competition: **Fort Riley**, Kan.;
- Student Team Skills: **Team Korea**.

SPECIAL COMPETITION CATEGORY WINNERS:

- Best Exhibit Cold Food Buffet: **SGT Jason Pratt**, Team Korea;
- Best Exhibit Hot Food Shown Cold: **SSG Bernard Book**, Team Korea;
- Best Exhibit in Pastry and Confection: **SPC Alicia Hight**, Team USAREUR;
- Most Artistic Centerpiece: **SPC Carmen Rosario**, Fort Bragg, N.C.;
- Best Team Table Exhibit: **Team USAREUR**;
- Contemporary Cooking: **SGT Joshua Speiss**, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.;
- Contemporary Pastry: **SPC Joanna Carrol**, Team USAREUR;
- Best Two-Member Team: Nutritional Hot Food Challenge, **Team Hawaii**;
- Baron H. Garland Culinary Knowledge Bowl: **Team Korea**;
- Best Centerpiece in Ice, **SFC David Russ**, Fort Bragg. 🇺🇸

The most coveted of prizes is the food-service Installation of the Year award, Hale said.

To earn the prize, a team must enter various competition categories and have a winner. Those include the Culinary Knowledge Bowl, Junior and Senior Chefs of the Year, Nutritional Hot Food Challenge, Field Competition and Cold Food Table, among others.

Teams and individual winners receive bronze, silver and gold medals. Additionally, this year’s Junior Chef of the Year will travel to Germany with the Senior Chef — who takes the title Army Chef of the Year — to study for one week at the La Cachette restaurant in Abentheuer, under the tutelage of one of Germany’s most renowned chefs, Master Chef Karl-Heinz Dickheier. 🇩🇪

▶ SPC Joseph Mussari works on his entry appetizer — shrimp and avocado ravioli with sautéed lobster.



ARMY MODERNIZES UNIT STATUS REPORTING

A NEW Web-based report and management tool allows the Army's Unit Status Report procedures to move online.

The USR, officially called the Defense Readiness Reporting System, is used to reveal whether American forces can perform their assigned missions. It was created to track detailed information on what U.S. forces and individual troops do, providing both the Army and the Office of the Secretary of Defense the most current readiness information, said Laura Junor, the Defense Department's DRRS Interagency director.

DRRS will provide linkages to Army personnel, logistics and equipment-readiness databases, allowing commanders time to assess and validate information.

The DRRS is slated to be online in October 2006, linking databases that support the Army's service-specific requirements for organizing, supplying, equipping, training, mobilizing, administering and maintaining forces. Total integration of DRRS for all Army reporting units will be no later than June 2007.

— Army News Service



June Happenings

International Volunteer Week	— June 1-7
D-Day Invasion Anniversary	— June 6
Army's 231st Birthday/Flag Day	— June 14
Father's Day	— June 18
Summer Begins	— June 21
GI Bill Signed, 1946	— June 22
Korean War Anniversary	— June 25

MENTAL HEALTH

Self-Assessment Program

ARMY personnel and their family members can take advantage of a new no-cost voluntary mental health self-assessment program that's available online.

Funded by the Department of Defense's Office of Health Affairs, the program provides immediate feedback and a list of resources.

The online approach is intended to help families and service members identify their own individual symptoms and get assistance. It addresses depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and alcohol abuse.

The program provides anonymous screening and referral services.

For more information visit
www.militarymentalhealth.org

Putting the
Pieces
Together

2006 SOLDIERS SHOW ON TOUR

THE U.S. Army Soldiers Show is one of more than 200 morale, welfare and recreation programs the Army provides Soldiers and families worldwide through the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center in Alexandria, Va. Here is the show's June and July schedule of performances. The schedule is subject to change.

— USA Community and Family Support Center

June	1 - 29	U.S. Army, Europe
July	4 - 5	Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.
	7	Red River Army Depot, Texas
	11 - 12	Redstone Arsenal, Ala.
	14 - 16	Fort Rucker, Ala.
	18 - 19	Fort Stewart, Ga.
	22 - 23	Fort Jackson, S.C.
	26 - 27	Fort Lee, Va.
	29 - 30	Fort Gordon, Ga.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS

THE Department of Defense's second-annual report on its sexual assault prevention and response program reflects increased understanding about what sexual assault is and a greater willingness to report it.

According to the report, in 2005 DOD received 2,374 allegations of sexual assault that involved a military member as either a victim or alleged perpetrator. That's up 40 percent from 2004, but may reflect a greater willingness to report such assaults than a surge in incidents.

The assault-prevention program enables victims to get medical care and counseling services without going through a criminal investigation. Of the 435 people who filed restricted reports last year, 25 percent later requested to change to an unrestricted report, opening the door to a criminal investigation.

DOD completed 1,386 sexual abuse investigations in 2005. By Dec. 31, 352 cases were pending actions and 274 offenders had received punitive action.

DOD's program focuses on education, not just to ensure people recognize and know how to report sexual assault, but that they help prevent it from happening in the first place.



To learn more about sexual-assault prevention and response, visit www.sapr.mil.



EARN \$\$ FOR REFERRALS

THROUGH a pilot program that began in February, Soldiers are now taking advantage of the new \$1,000 enlistee-referral bonus.

To receive the bonus, the Soldier making the referral for enlistment must provide the name of the applicant before the applicant schedules an appointment with an Army recruiter.

There are no retroactive provisions to the program, officials said. Payments will be made directly to the referring Soldier's military pay account within 45 days after the person who was referred completes advanced individual training, or AIT.

Soldiers may receive the \$1,000 referral bonus for referring anyone except a member of their immediate families.

Those not eligible to receive a referral bonus include

Soldiers serving in a recruiting or retention assignment, or receiving special-duty assignment pay for recruiting or retention duties.

Referrals must be made via the Sergeant Major of the Army Recruiting Team. The referring Soldier must either submit the referral through the SMART Web link or the U.S. Army Recruiting toll-free line that's dedicated to the program.

— ARNEWS



For more information about the bonus, call (800) 223-3735, ext. 6-0473 or go to www.usarec.army.mil/smart.



Single-Parent Soldiers

PARENTHOOD is considered by many to be one of the toughest yet most rewarding jobs in life. It can be full of

great sacrifices and memorable experiences, but for those in the military — especially Soldiers participating in operations Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom — parenthood becomes an intricate balancing act between commitment to family and duty to country. For single parents, choosing a career in the military can be a heart-wrenching decision based on what is best for their families' futures.

"My family is the most important thing in the world to me," said **SGT Emma Merriel**, of the 864th Engineer Battalion, from Fort Lewis, Wash. As a single mother, the decision to join the Army when her son was only six months old was not a decision she took lightly, but it was a choice she made to provide for her son, Sam, now 4-years-old.

"It's definitely a different lifestyle, being a single parent in the military," Merriel said. With the support of her parents, who took care of Sam during her year in Iraq and who are supporting her now during her current deployment in Afghanistan, she's able to focus on her mission and make a significant contribution to her unit.

"Although it's a tough job out here, it's nothing compared to the job I'll have when I return home and can be a parent again."

Although parents in the military spend significant time away from their children, many say the service still proves to be a rewarding and worthwhile career. The economic security to provide for their children allows for a fulfilling family life when they are together.

For single mother **SGT Sharonnia Larkins**, also deployed in Afghanistan with the 864th Engr. Bn., there is no job better suited for her than being a Soldier.

"It's a hard job and it's a big challenge, but to my four-year-old daughter, Tyaunah, I'm a hero, and that makes it worthwhile," Larkins said.

As engineers in Task Force Pacemaker, Merriel and



Larkins are supporting the unit's work on major roadways through enemy territory in Afghanistan. Connecting the provincial capital cities of Kandahar to Tarin Kowt in the south, and Sharana to Gardez and Organ-E in the east, these unconventional moms go where humanitarian organizations cannot safely venture.

"These single moms are providing the Afghan people with a means of travel and a link to the outside world," said **CPT Mona Tanner**, commander of the 864th's Company A. "They are helping to construct the solid foundations required for an effective physical and political infrastructure that will allow Afghanistan to finally support its own people."

The deployed single military parents of Task Force Pacemaker make great personal sacrifices every day in order to assist the people of Afghanistan.

"Although it's a tough job out here, it's nothing compared to the job I'll have when I return home and can be a parent again," Merriel said.

1LT Claudia Crossland is with the Task Force Peacemaker Public Affairs Office.

WARRIOR ETHOS

A photograph of three soldiers in full combat gear, including helmets and body armor, running up a steep sand dune. They are carrying rifles and appear to be in a desert environment. The soldiers are in motion, with their bodies angled upwards as they ascend the dune. The background is a clear blue sky.

I will never quit

The Warrior Ethos is the common thread that has tied us all together throughout 231 years of service to our nation. Since 1775, American Soldiers have answered the call to duty. From Valley Forge to the battlefields of Gettysburg; from the Argonne Forest to the shores of Normandy; from the rice paddies of Korea and Vietnam to the mountains of Afghanistan and the streets of Baghdad; our military history is rich with the willingness of generation after generation to live by the Warrior Ethos.

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

MICHAEL OLIVERO

JOINED THE ACTIVE ARMY

PROTECTED OUR TROOPS FROM THEATER BALLISTIC MISSILE ATTACKS IN SAUDI ARABIA.



JOINED THE ARMY RESERVE

ANALYZES THREATS TO HELP PREVENT
TERRORIST ATTACKS IN THE U.S.

BECAME A CIVILIAN

HIRED AS A HIGH-ALTITUDE AIR DEFENSE
EXPERT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.



WE'LL KEEP YOU MARCHING FORWARD.



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ARMY RESERVE

Since joining the Army, Michael Olivero has come a long way. Through personal strength and firm resolve, he took the skills he learned on Active Duty and in the Army Reserve and used them to start a successful civilian career. You can do the same. By joining the Army Reserve, you'll continue to serve your country, plus get a bonus, extra paycheck and the chance to train near home. Learn more about SPC Michael Olivero and how you can build a future filled with possibilities. Visit goarmyreserve.com/michael or call 800-USA-ARMY.





CALL TO DUTY

BOOTS ON THE GROUND



U.S. ARMY BIRTHDAY

JUNE 14, 1775 - 2006

